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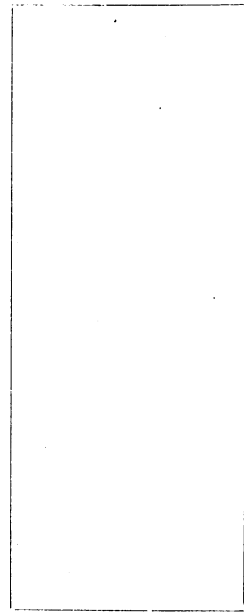
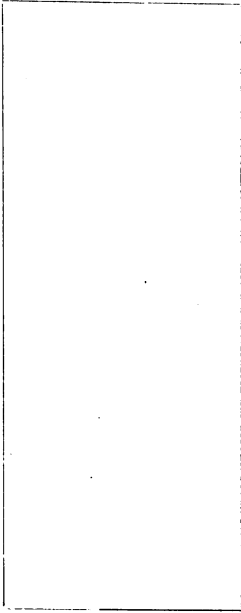
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THE COUNTESS OF NORTHBROOK
Painted by H. Harris Brown

—Exhibited at the New Gallery, London



MRS. ARTHUR DUGDALE
Painted by H. Harris Brown

*Exhibited at the Royal Academy, '07
Honorable Mention, Paris Salon, '08*

The English Point of View in Art

By EVELYN MARIE STUART

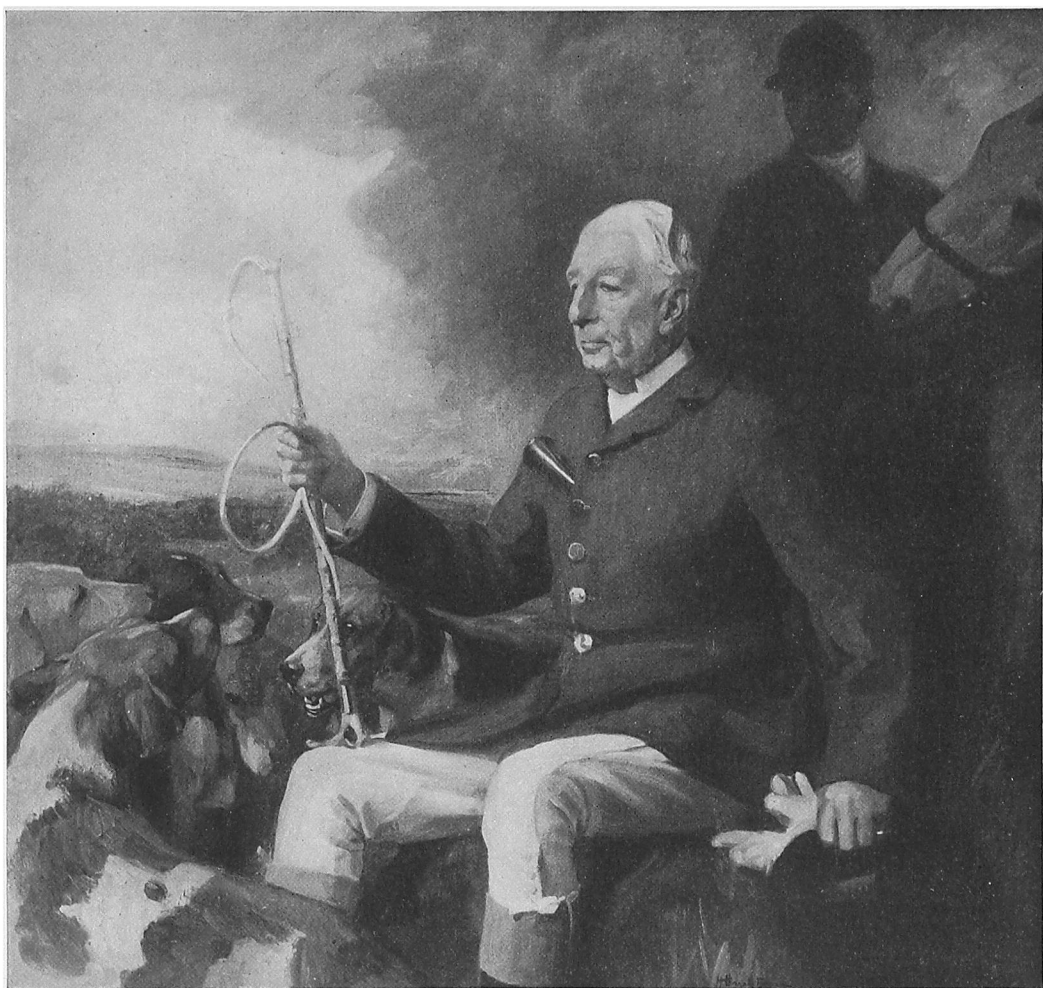
THE recent exhibition at the Chicago Galleries of Henry Reinhardt and Son of portraits by H. Harris Brown of London, Member of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, has served to revive our interest in British art at a critical period when everything English is being subjected to scrutiny. Happy, indeed, is the land or the man whose integrity is such that the criticism of enemies, awakening thought and investigation, results, finally, not only in exoneration but in a greatly increased measure of approbation and regard. This, today, is the enviable position of Great Britain politically: accused as an oppressor she has been proven a liberator, civilizer and protector. So, too, with English art, long accused by some critics as palely in-

tellectual, affected, bloodless and full of technical flaws, we find it, upon investigation, to be refined, poetic, harmonious, well-balanced and beautiful, the logical lineal descendant of classic tradition just as English governmental policies are the logical and linear descendants of Roman law.

As a matter of fact, it is doubtful if English art has ever been appraised at its full value or accorded its rightful position by critical comment. It remains, therefore, in righting this condition for the critic to explain and justify its claims.

To begin with, all British paintings from Crone, Stark, Vincent, Constable, Gainsborough, Romney, Reynolds, Lawrence, Raeburn, down through the Pre-Raphaelites and Turner to the most modern of Eng-

THE ENGLISH POINT OF VIEW IN ART



WILLIAM FORBES, ESQUIRE, OF CALLENDAR, MASTER OF THE HURWORTH HOUNDS
Painted by H. Harris Brown

—Presented to William Forbes, Esquire, by The Hunt
—Exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1913, and at the Paris Salon, 1914

lish painters, are founded upon a cardinal principle, the first essential characteristic of all good art, namely, that of decoration. This, indeed, is the fundamental necessity of any work of art from an Indian blanket or a Chinese porcelain to a finished modern picture. Art must be decorative. It may be curious and grotesque, simple and beautiful, but it must be decorative or it is not art in any sense. And what then is the first essential of a decoration? Is it not arrangement, the grouping or spacing of a series of spots, lines or more or less realistic objects? In a picture it is composition and

by the strength or weakness of this we shall judge the fundamental value of any feat in painting.

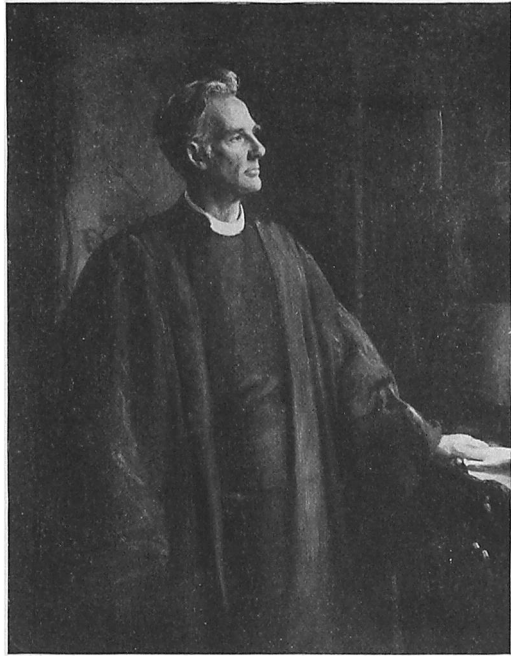
So, to begin with, one observes that good composition invariably prevails in English painting. When it errs in this respect it is on the side of over-pronounced harmony, bordering upon formalism, but even this is preferable to the loose and formless concepts of much that has been dubbed impressionism and modernism.

English art is always essentially decorative, a fact that its critics have failed to observe so intent have they been upon the

THE ENGLISH POINT OF VIEW IN ART

discovery of surface flaws. However, it possesses another essential not always overlooked and often misjudged when observed, a splendid development of the distinguishing characteristic of European art, namely, realism. This analysis will doubtless come as a shock to those who are carelessly wont to dub all plausible or possible effects in paintings photographic. There is indeed a school of thinkers who do not discriminate between fact as seen in photography and possibility and as seen in realistic art.

Even high surface finish and minute attention to detail do not always result in photographic effects for the difference between painting and photography lies in composition, not in detail. Decorative composition is possible only to an artist and the man with this gift can almost make a work of art with the camera. He is however, limited here by the impossibility of giving his selective faculty full reign. In painting he is free and he may put in every little detail that engrosses his fancy with loving



THE REVEREND THE HONORABLE EDWARD
LYTTELTON, D. D., HEAD MASTER OF
ETON Painted by H. Harris Brown
—Exhibited at Royal Society of Portrait Painters

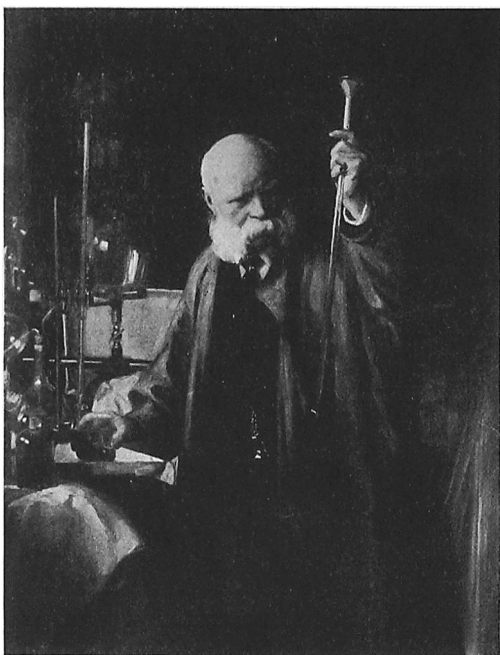


MRS. TOLER Painted by H. Harris Brown
—Exhibited at the New Gallery, London, at the
Paris Salon and at the International Exhibition,
Venice.

care and still remain free from the curse of the photographic if only his imagination has supplied a decorative arrangement to begin with. One could not accuse the great Flemish and Dutch Realists of being photographic. Does not Vermeer of Delft, than whom none other has given more loving care to surface finish and beauty of paint, delight one also by the perfect balance and rhythm of his arrangement?

In fact, it is only in the hands of the painstaking craftsmen of Munich who, in common with the rest of their race, are short on imagination, that realism has ever degenerated to the photographic.

When one asserts therefore, that realism is the distinguishing character of European art from Greek statuary to modern painting, one states what investigation will establish as a fact. In art as in music there are two scales upon which compositions are based. In music it is the Oriental and the Occidental. In art it is much the same, the purely



SIR ANDREW NOBLE
Painted by H. Harris Brown
--Exhibited at the Royal Academy and at the
Paris Salon

decorative or Asiatic, and the decorative plus realism, which is the European. An effort to produce the illusion of the real is what chiefly differentiates European from Oriental art. It is indeed its distinguishing characteristic.

With their beautiful and serious respect for tradition one might expect the English to produce an art in which the conventions are glorified rather than deified and this is practically what one finds in the portraits of H. Harris Brown. They present the conventional type of aristocratic portrait in its ultimate perfection. They are stately and distinguished like the manners of some gentleman of the old school and yet like them, always suave and graceful, with a naturalness that is the last refinement of art. They are, in addition to that, convincing likenesses which we accept as the sentiments of real people.

About the whole exhibition hovered the charm of an atmosphere like that of the

classics of English fiction, the atmosphere of the life and manners of the country. One felt that these portraits could well hang in family galleries beside Reynolds, Raeburn, Gainsborough, exhibiting the same family likeness to predecessors as do the subjects. Like the subjects, however, they were still of today with the freshness and originality of a new generation. The method of handling is more spontaneous and broader than that of older schools showing the influence of our day with its sweeping outlook on a bigger world.

Out of the very heart of this present day world and its stupendous events was the portrait of Ian Hay Beith, distinguished soldier and author. There is a something thrilling about the reserved face of this young Scot with its wonderful grim hint of determination. One can imagine him a quiet man given to thought and action.

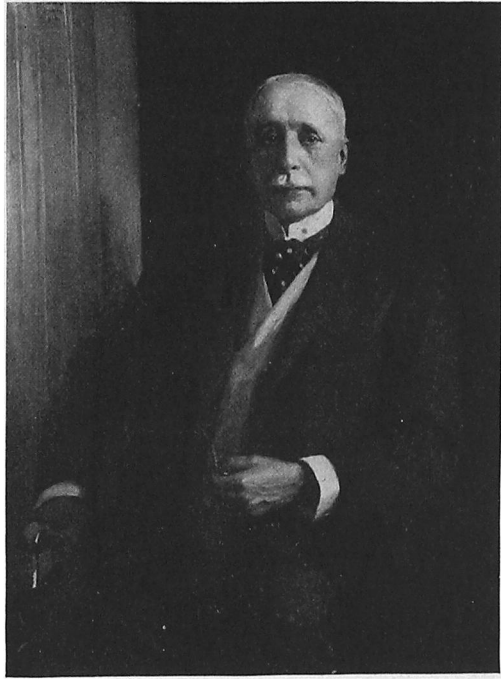
Another most fascinating portrait was that of Mrs. Hungerford Pollen, which again reminded one of the spiritual quality which makes the beauty of age so potent. Here was one of those lovely old ladies that one associates with "lavender and old lace," rose diamonds and cameos, and, like them, gracious with the memory of past romance. We see in her face how the spirit dominates the flesh in producing this loveliness of age, for we feel a consciousness of long years of fine thought and noble action. That the original has been truthfully presented by the artist is proven in the history of this splendid old lady who is famous in her world as a connoisseur of laces and the author of a standard work on the subject. A friend of Thackeray, Rossetti, Millais and Burne-Jones she enjoyed the distinction of seeing her drawing room the meeting place of the great intellectuals of her day. The fullness of her years are crowned with the honors which her sons have achieved, and all of this we feel in her portrait so amazingly well has the artist realized the character of his sitter. Beyond this, however, the portrait is a picture of great decorative

strength, a masterpiece of painting and a work of high art, its white of old lace and silver hair, and its black of velvet and satin being full of color and life. This was exhibited at the Royal Academy of London in 1916.

As gracefully composed and full of romance as some troubador's ballad of knightly days was the portrait of Mrs. G. Allen Peabody, which we have shown before in these pages. Here we have a decorative arrangement of line and color that at once proclaims the poetic quality in artist and sitter. Something in the mind and temperament of this delicately featured woman of lofty brow and dreamy but intellectual eye, we know must have suggested a treatment which gives us all the soul of her. The brilliant red of the robe she wears over her black bodice, the pale and warm tones of her skin, the soft gold brown of her hair, compose a scheme of rich color and fine contrasts.

Another telling portrait of a fine flower of femininity is that of Mrs. Toler, who, like the sitter just mentioned, impresses with a suggestion of discriminating mentality. Like the Peabody portrait, too, it possesses a decorative quality which will not permit it ever to become passe. Painted sixteen years ago it yet is not out of style so well chosen is the costume as to fundamental values. This work was exhibited at the New Gallery, London, and, later, at the Paris Salon and the International Exhibition of Venice where it proved a great success.

So much of English tradition and ceremony is woven into some of these portraits that they are veritable documents of a nation's life. Thus the Lord MacDonnell, G. C. S. I., is more than a portrait of a personality, for it is a picture telling us much concerning a certain order in a carefully regulated and precisely graded social scale. Uniform, robe and ribbon all have their story to tell, a story generally reaching back



EDWARD RYERSON
By H. Harrison Brown

into the past and rich with the romance of chivalry.

Mr. Brown has indeed a most picturesque faculty in rendering what shall be an historic portrait. It is for this reason doubtless that he has been commissioned so frequently to paint state portraits of distinguished personages for the permanent public collections of great national institutions.

Such is his famous portrait of the Bishop of Winchester, done for Christ Church, Oxford, wherein the artist has found both color and significance in the rich robe of blue velvet which surmounts the ecclesiastical vestments of his sitter. The Bishop of Winchester being automatically Prelate of the Order of the Garter it is most appropriate to thus present him wearing the Garter Robe, and variation, interest, and color, are added to the charms of the picture.

Of this character also are his celebrated portraits of Dr. Alexander, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland, which was purchased for the National Gallery of

THE ENGLISH POINT OF VIEW IN ART

Ireland in Dublin, the Reverend, the Honorable Edward Lyttelton, D. D., Head Master of Eton, a typical educator and divine, unmistakably a man of lofty ideals, firm convictions and unswerving adherence thereto in every act of life,

Another well-known Brown portrait is that of the Earl of Loreburn, Lord High Chancellor, presented by the Benchers and now in the Inner Temple of London. In this man's features we find a strong resemblance to Sir Walter Scott, and Lord Loreburn hails from Sir Walter's part of Scotland. History in character is the presentment of The Lord de Ros, K. P., placed on a canvas where the splendor of his Knight of St. Patrick robes of blue over his uniform of The First Life Guards, is supported by what we may call the grandiloquence of the design, where large draperies supply the necessary waves of dark. This picture shows us a fine type of English aristocrat for General, The Lord de Ros, Premier Baron of England, and the 24th to carry the title, is a worthy descendant of his ancestor the 4th Baron who gloriously led the second division at the Battle of Crecy. In England the Peers have ever been an integral part of the nation, and Robert de Ros was one of the twenty-five Barons appointed to enforce the observance of that Magna Carta from which all our ideas of liberty derive.

The mother of the Lord de Ros of the Brown portrait rode over the field of Waterloo with the Duke of Wellington after the battle. She was the daughter of that Duke of Richmond at whose house in Brussels took place that Ball which inspired Byron's: "There was the sound of revelry by night." The de Ros family is a fine example of the law of heredity.

This indeed is a phase of portrait painting which has engrossed Mr. Brown's keen perception on more than one occasion and no one could be more firmly a believer in heredity than is he. A frequent diversion of his in the great country homes of Eng-

land and Scotland has been the comparing of present day photographs of members of the family with portraits of ancestors in the halls and galleries. Often he has discovered almost exact recurrences of type, as various members of this generation would repeat completely the features of ancestors of centuries gone by.

This has undoubtedly been a factor, too, in the serious development of his art, the knowledge that he is forging new links in the long strong chain of honorable tradition. It perhaps accounts for the substantial and courtly quality with which his art, so essentially rich in form, is in such well-balanced accord.

In commenting upon the brilliance with which this artist has illustrated the pages of time with studies of the life of his generation one could not fail to recall his portrait of Sir Andrew Noble, exhibited at the Royal Academy and Paris Salon. He shows us the great scientist, head of Elswick, the great Armament works of Britain, busy in his laboratory surrounded by the test-tubes, bottles and apparatus with which he works, all placed with apparent carelessness and yet, on examination, proving to have been most skillfully fitted into a harmonious scheme of effective touches of light and shade, and a seriously designed arrangement of line.

A picture known to all the hunting fraternity of Britain is that of William Forbes, Esq., of Callendar, Master of Hounds. Here is a noble old type of sportsman surrounded by the pack he knows and loves, his horse and groom in the background. It is not only a portrait but truly a picture with an interesting and original composition, every object having been carefully considered in the working out of a subtle and pleasing pattern.

We are happy to be able to illustrate some of these memorable works as well as those actually included in the present exhibition. Among Mr. Brown's most celebrated portraits of women none perhaps is

THE ENGLISH POINT OF VIEW IN ART

more spirited and charming than that of Mrs. Arthur Dugdale, exhibited first at the Royal Academy and later at the Paris Salon, where it was accorded an Honorable Mention. A niece of Lord Roberts and daughter of a distinguished soldier, the sitter has a certain proud, yet alert, bearing that suggests a woman of great activity. The Countess of Northbrook, famed in society as a great beauty, justifies this repute in the Brown portrait, which has been a favorite with her family and friends. His portrait of Mrs. Ince Anderton, which won for him a medal at the Paris Salon, will be remembered as having been exhibited at the Pittsburgh International Exposition of 1913.

In 1902 the French Government purchased his portrait of Mrs. Boyd of Glas-try, for the National Collection, thus adding the name of H. Harris Brown to that list of non-Frenchmen whom France has honored by placing their work upon the walls of the Luxembourg, where rest such pictures as Whistler's "Portrait of his Mother" and Sargent's "Carmencita."

It will thus be seen that H. Harris Brown has achieved distinction as a painter of women as well as men, something which cannot be said of all who essay portraiture.

His intense interest in character and types led him last autumn to far Montana, where, among the Crow and Cheyenne Indians, he achieved a boyhood's ambition and painted five pictures of Indians, one a large decorative canvas of a Cheyenne sitting on a rock in a landscape where the orange of his face and the crimson in the feather of his war bonnet are repeated in the evening sky and in the horizon red in the glow of the setting sun.

At Reinhardt's his newly finished canvas of Edward Ryerson drew much praise from Chicagoans who found it a most excellent

likeness and a pleasing picture. Concerning the portrait of Mrs. Herbert Stone there was a greater variety of opinion, the consensus being favorable however. It was a fine example of restraint and simplicity and in its clear cut lines and smart ensemble was a something awake and alive and American that was altogether refreshing and agreeable.

In his American portraits one had a better opportunity to study the man and the artist independent of his fascinating background of British tradition. Strictly on his merits as a painter he shone here with no less brilliance than as a chronicler of the grace and elegance of English ceremonials, ritual and form.

His love of form, however, never deserts him for structure is ever present beneath the tenderest or strongest of his works.

And, after all, is not the English point of view in Art in great measure the classical one embraced from a love of harmony and order? "Order is Heaven's first law" we are told and surely what order is to society, arrangement is to art, its basis and beginning, its hope of continuity, its righteousness and proof of divine inspiration. In painting the rest is a matter of color sense and technique, things which may, in a measure, atone for poor arrangement, glorify or obscure good original construction, according to the measure of their excellence.

It is not without reason that we find this recognition of essentials in all of English painters from the humblest to the best, from the most ancient to the last exhibitor. Love of fair play and good form, which we recognize as characteristically English, are only other outcroppings of the same principle, a sense of balance and order, a thing which makes for justice in society and harmony in art.